

Through the local community partners from Child Family Health International (CFHI), aspiring medical students can get a deeper understanding of the medical system in Bolivia. I performed an observational study in Tarija, Bolivia that lasted 2 weeks, visiting the largest local regional hospital, San Juan de Dios. I was assigned to two different rotations, the operating room and the maternity ward. My observations in Bolivia were compared to my observations made as a medical scribe in Tacoma. The major difference noted was the use of reporting technology. In Tarija, all medical documentation was recorded on paper, while in the American medical system, all documentation is done electronically. The issue with paper medical records is that they cannot be shared with other medical facilities in Bolivia. It is also difficult to find patient records even if the patient visits the same facility due to time constraints and the sheer volume of old medical records. This makes it more difficult to treat patients for new and recurring conditions, as well as putting more stress on doctors and patients. In Tacoma family health clinics, electronic records from different facilities and visits are always reviewed to help treat all illnesses to avoid complications between conditions and increase efficiency. The major challenge to implementing electronic records in Bolivia is lack of financial resources. Despite this, Bolivian doctors work hard to help patients. Strengthening Bolivia's medical infrastructure through records keeping will help reduce the burden on doctors and allow patients to receive more efficient personalized care.